

4 June 1986
MBK-6008

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

THROUGH: Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT: Monthly Report -- Bangkok Bureau -- May 1986

I. GENERAL

A. On the evening of 7 May the rains began. It rained all day on the 8th and by Friday morning, 9 May, Bangkok was flooded. According to the Thai media, Bangkok had been hit with the worst rains in 500 years. The old timers at the Bureau were unable to recall worse overall flooding in the city. Despite the closure of some main streets by the authorities and the high water generally, about 95 percent made it to the office in what can only be called a magnificent show of dedication. Some had to leave or push stalled automobiles while a few were turned back by the police or just found conditions impossible without a boat. Everyone had to wade through high water with some being forced to go through waist-deep sections to get to the Bureau. Schedules had to be altered and work shifts adjusted, but all units were represented and the Bureau continued to function amazingly well. On Friday the 9th, seven people spent the night in makeshift sleeping accommodations at the Bureau, and several others spent the night there on the 10th as well. Despite being hungry, tired, and in some cases not a little wet, everyone survived in relatively good spirits. Fortunately electricity, telephone, and communications services held up throughout the emergency. All told, it was a fine example of what can be done when a dedicated group of people decide they will not be deterred from accomplishing their mission.

B. On 1 May, the government of Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanon was defeated in Parliament in a vote on a royal decree. Intense opposition had been manifest for weeks, but very few people expected the government to lose. However, large defections from one of the ruling coalition parties caused the damage, and the prime minister was suddenly faced with either resigning or dissolving Parliament. Prem quickly took the latter course and announced new elections for 27 July. The rest of the month has witnessed the resulting fallout as many MP's and other prominent politicians change parties, create new parties, or try to rally established parties. Then on the 27th, the prime minister took the unprecedented step of removing General Athit Kamleng-ek as Army commander -- the most powerful post in the military. General Athit accepted the change with grace which has helped ease tensions which had been developing both within the military and in political circles. General Athit retains the less powerful position of supreme military commander until his retirement in August.

C. The DCM has set up an "Internal Political Situation Coordination Group" with a representative of FBIS as a permanent member. The group brings together a number of people from different agencies at the Embassy

who are interested in following Thai domestic politics, particularly during the run up to the 27 July elections. The group meets twice a month, with the Bureau Chief or Deputy Chief together with one of the senior editors in attendance.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. On the 22d, the Bureau was notified by the Chief of Analysis Group that JPRS had published a 62-page report entitled "People's Republic of Kampuchea: Biographic Information on Officials" which was receiving "vigorous applause from consumers." The report represents the combined efforts of the Bureau's Cambodian monitors [redacted] STAT
[redacted] -- who carefully compiled references to [redacted] STAT
Cambodian officials over many years -- and [redacted] STAT
who provided the computer expertise. The compilation also has been well received in Bangkok. One Embassy section had begun to compile a similar list, but terminated their effort once they saw the Bureau's product. So far the Bureau has had to ask for an additional five copies to meet local requests.

2. The Bureau assumed weekend coverage of Moscow, Beijing, and Hanoi casts in Vietnamese between 3-25 May to assist Okinawa Bureau while they were down to one Vietnamese monitor. In addition, the Bureau helped Okinawa with processing of lengthy installments of a Le Duc Tho article broadcast by Hanoi on 5 and 6 May.

3. Malaysian monitors alerted the Bureau to planned television coverage of elections in Malaysia's troubled state of Sabah. The Bureau arranged to have the audio from Kuala Lumpur's RTM television network 2 fed from ROSET coverage on the 6th. Several FYIs were filed giving early initial results before the major press agencies began picking up the story.

4. On 27 and early 28 May, the Bureau put many Thai radio and television stations on open watch following the announcement that General Arthit Kamlang-ek had been dismissed as Thai Army commander. No coup activity was detected, and the Bureau was able to stand down after 24 hours.

5. The Bureau's AFP service received by landline went dead on the 8th and was not restored until the 16th. From discussions with the local AFP office this appeared to be a general Bangkok outage. During this period the Bureau quietly continued coverage from ROSET.

B. Lateral Services

1. In response to a Bureau request, AG provided a very useful analysis of the DPRK's relations with the Sihanouk-led Cambodian coalition, the PRK, and Vietnam. The local NIA consumer who had requested our views was very appreciative of the quick response and of the contents of the analysis.

2. In response to an urgent request from the Immigration and Naturalization Service officer at the Embassy, the Cambodian monitors translated a series of handwritten letters which are a part of a current case INS is working on.

3. On the 29th, the Bureau began receiving two additional copies of the JPRS "Southeast Asia Report" series for local consumers at the NIA and Australian Embassy who requested the publication following recent contacts with the Bureau.

4. One item was processed at the request of the American Embassy in Laos.

C. Technical

ESI technician [] completed installing the retrofits on the motors of both ROSET antennas during the month. In addition, he and the Bureau engineer and assistant engineer worked on the brake assemblies of both antennas. Drain plugs had not been removed at the time of initial installation causing water to back up in the casing. Both brake assemblies were rusted extensively. After a thorough cleaning it was determined that the analyst dish brake should function more or less normally, but replacement parts will be required for the operational dish brake. STAT

III. ADMINISTRATION STAT

A. Personnel STAT

1. [] (Abidjan Bureau editor) capped a long-distance romance by getting married in California on 2 May. [] is back at the Bureau and [] plans to transfer to Bangkok later this summer. STAT

2. Bureau engineer [] received a well-deserved QSI effective on the 11th for superior performance in overseeing many facets of ROSET construction. STAT

3. Special Achievement Awards with cash emoluments were presented by the visiting Chief of Operations, [] on the 22d to the following for their superior performance during Bang Ping remodeling and ROSET construction: [] STAT

4. Technician trainee [] entered on duty on 19 May. He is assigned to Bang Ping. STAT

5. A promising Cambodian applicant, [] has been found in England. London Bureau has passed on a tentative offer of employment and is assisting in processing. STAT

6. An applicant to fill a vacancy in the teletype unit which will develop when the current unit chief transfers to the ROSET cruising position has been identified and initial processing has begun.

IV. VISITS

A. Hong Kong Bureau editor [] on the 2d while on personal travel in Bangkok. STAT

B. [] ST Research consultant, on 5-6 May to discuss tape recording of fax signals and review equipment configuration for recording Indian television. STAT

STAT

C. ESI technician [redacted] from the 9th to install motor retrofits and repair brake assemblies on the ROSET antennas.

D. [redacted] analyst on extensive TDY with the Embassy Economic Section, on the 15th to discuss requirements for economic reporting on Thailand.

E. [redacted], Chief/Operations Group, on a management visit from 20-24 May.

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Chief, Bangkok Bureau

RMB:cla

Attachment:
Monthly Production Report

BANGKOK BUREAU PRODUCTION REPORT FOR MAY 1986

I. TOTALS FROM ALL SOURCES:

TOTAL PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH:	738,780
TOTAL NON-PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH:	354,560
TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLISHABLE ITEMS FILED DURING MONTH:	1,542

	<u>BROAD- CASTS</u>	<u>PRESS AGENCIES</u>	<u>PUBLI- CATION</u>
II. <u>INPUT OF REGULAR COVERAGE:</u> (minutes or issues per week)	20,510 min.	20,420 min.	256.00 issues
III. <u>OUTPUT FROM ROSET SOURCES:</u> (publishable words per month)			

INDONESIA

Denpasar TVRI Television Network in English	900	
Jakarta ANTARA in English		13,920

MALAYSIA

Kuala Lumpur BERNAMA in English		17,690
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PHILIPPINES

Manila PNA in English		22,240
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SRI LANKA

Colombo Lanka Puwath in English		320
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IV. OUTPUT FROM ALL OTHER SOURCES:
(publishable words per month)AUSTRALIA

Melbourne Overseas Service in English	20,170	
Sydney THE AUSTRALIAN in English		700

BANGLADESH

Dhaka Overseas Service in English	960	
Dhaka Domestic Service in English	6,750	

	BROAD- CASTS	PRESS AGENCIES	PUBLI- CATION
<u>BANGLADESH</u> (continued)			
Dhaka Domestic Service in Bengali	1,820		
Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English			1,840
<u>BRUNEI</u>			
Kuala Belait THE BORNEO BULLETIN in English			160
<u>BURMA</u>			
Rangoon Domestic Service in Burmese	5,140		
Rangoon WORKING PEOPLE'S DAILY in English			170
<u>CAMBODIA</u>			
Phnom Penh Domestic Service in Cambodian	29,790		
Phnom Penh SPK in English		16,550	
Phnom Penh SPK in French		6,240	
<u>CHINA</u>			
Beijing in Cambodian to Cambodia	380		
Beijing in Hindi to India	230		
Beijing in Malay to Malaysia	410		
Beijing in Urdu to India and Pakistan	2,970		
<u>CLANDESTINE</u>			
(Clandestine) Voice of the People of Burma in Burmese	6,860		
(Clandestine) Voice of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian	24,220		
(Clandestine) Voice of the Khmer in Cambodian	14,250		
(Clandestine) Voice of the National Army Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian	12,740		
(Clandestine) Voice of Malayan Democracy in Malay	1,580		
(Clandestine) Voice of the People of Malaysia in Malay	3,420		

	<u>BROAD- CASTS</u>	<u>PRESS AGENCIES</u>	<u>PUBLI- CATION</u>
<u>HONG KONG</u>			
Hong Kong AFP in English		72,150	
<u>INDIA</u>			
Delhi General Overseas Service in English	4,660		
Delhi Domestic Service in English	48,370		
Delhi Domestic Service in Tamil	100		
Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English		600	
Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English			460
Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English			570
<u>INDONESIA</u>			
Jakarta International Service in English	750		
Jakarta Domestic Service in Indonesian	7,460		
Jakarta KOMPAS in Indonesian			300
Jakarta MERDEKA in Indonesian			1,490
Jakarta SINAR HARAPAN in Indonesian			640
<u>LAOS</u>			
Vientiane Domestic Service in Laos	22,580		
Vientiane KPL in English		14,460	
<u>MALAYSIA</u>			
Kuala Lumpur International Service in English	4,360		
Kuala Lumpur Domestic Service in English	4,250		
Kuala Lumpur Domestic Service in Malay	990		
Kuala Lumpur NEW STRAITS TIMES in English			740
Kuala Lumpur BERITA HARIAN in Malay			640
Kuala Lumpur UTUSAN MALAYSIA in Malay			460

	<u>BROAD- CASTS</u>	<u>PRESS AGENCIES</u>	<u>PUBLI- CATION</u>
<u>NEPAL</u>			
Katmandu External Service in English	1,200		
Katmandu THE RISING NEPAL in English			180
<u>PAKISTAN</u>			
Karachi Overseas Service in Urdu	450		
Karachi Domestic Service in English	10,950		
Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu	15,670		
<u>SINGAPORE</u>			
Singapore Domestic Service in English	410		
Singapore THE STRAITS TIMES in English			220
<u>SRI LANKA</u>			
Colombo International Service in English	15,030		
Colombo SUN in English			2,720
<u>THAILAND</u>			
Bangkok Voice of Free Asia in English	3,990		
Bangkok Voice of Free Asia in Thai	3,450		
Bangkok Voice of Free Asia in Vietnamese	350		
Bangkok Domestic Service in English	3,230		
Bangkok Domestic Service in Thai	11,560		
Bangkok First Army Division Radio in Thai	840		
Bangkok Television Service in Thai	6,280		
Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English			41,140
Bangkok BANGKOK WORLD in English			11,970
Bangkok THE NATION in English			47,910
Bangkok ZHONG HUA RIBAO in Chinese			1,090
Bangkok MATICHON in Thai			6,320
Bangkok MATICHON SUT SAPDA in Thai			1,610

BROAD- CASTS	PRESS AGENCIES	PUBLI- CATION
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THAILAND (continued)

Bangkok NAED NA in Thai		2,980
Bangkok SIAM RAT in Thai		3,240
Bangkok SIAM RAT SAPDA WICHAN in Thai		600
Bangkok THAI RAT in Thai		660

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Moscow in Burmese to Burma	900	
Moscow in Cambodian to Cambodia	2,730	
Moscow in Indonesian to Indonesia	800	
Moscow in Thai to Thailand	1,910	
Moscow in Urdu to Pakistan	1,220	

UNITED KINGDOM

London BBC World Service in English	9,030	
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VIETNAM

Hanoi International Service in English	5,490	
Hanoi International Service in Thai	380	
Hanoi Domestic Service in Vietnamese	80,050	
Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese		29,060
Hanoi QUAN DOI NHAN DAN in Vietnamese		14,710